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Canada's North Today

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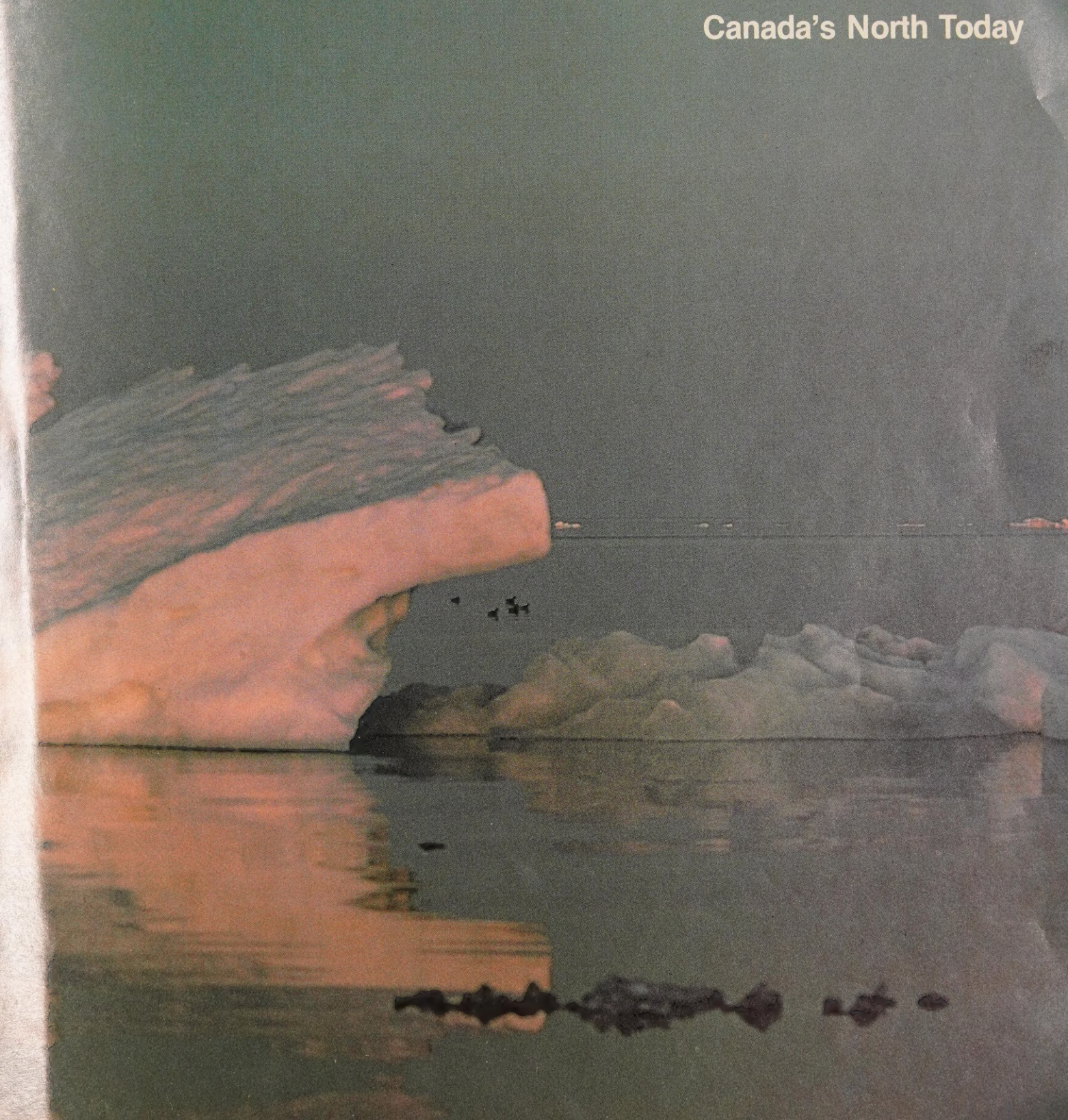
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Cover photo

Inukshooks are pillars of stone laid one upon another "like a person". At a distance they are just that, forlorn figures silhouetted against the horizon, standing in a vast, treeless and timeless land, monuments to people and to a way of life now gone. Their age is probably the age of man in the Arctic, for the Inuit say they were there before they came. Inukshooks served many purposes: as landmarks to identify one particular place from another; to give bearings to a traveller coming in from the frozen sea to a flat featureless coast; and in hunting. Long rows of these were built to simulate man and placed in such a way as to lead or drive the caribou herds to a place of ambush.





We're All Northerners But...

When the grouse gray clouds of autumn bring the first moist and fat snowflakes of winter, the land begins to look alike. Winter unfolds its white blanket from the Arctic Ocean to the Great Lakes, levelling differences and creating one image.

The snow clings to the nets of the Maritime fisherman, and dusts the steeply-sloped rooftops of British Columbia mountain homes. It touches the flushed cheeks of Quebec school children and moistens the hat brims of businessmen hurrying into tall Toronto office buildings.

It presents the Niagara grapevine with a frosty white gown while the great black and

white Canada goose calls goodbye to a lone Indian trapper preparing his equipment in a faraway forest.

Snow does not discriminate. It affects all Canadians, gently reminding us that we are a northern people who have built a great polar nation in spite of an unpredictable, harsh and at times downright cruel, climate.

Sometimes we need that reminder. Too often we forget the great legacy and the potential of our northern home, especially



Resolute Bay, NWT: two children play beside a komatik - the Inuit sled once pulled by dogs and now often by snowmobile.

that vast area beyond 60th parallel of latitude – the land we have come to call our North with a capital N.

Sit back for a moment and consider this seemingly limitless hinterland.

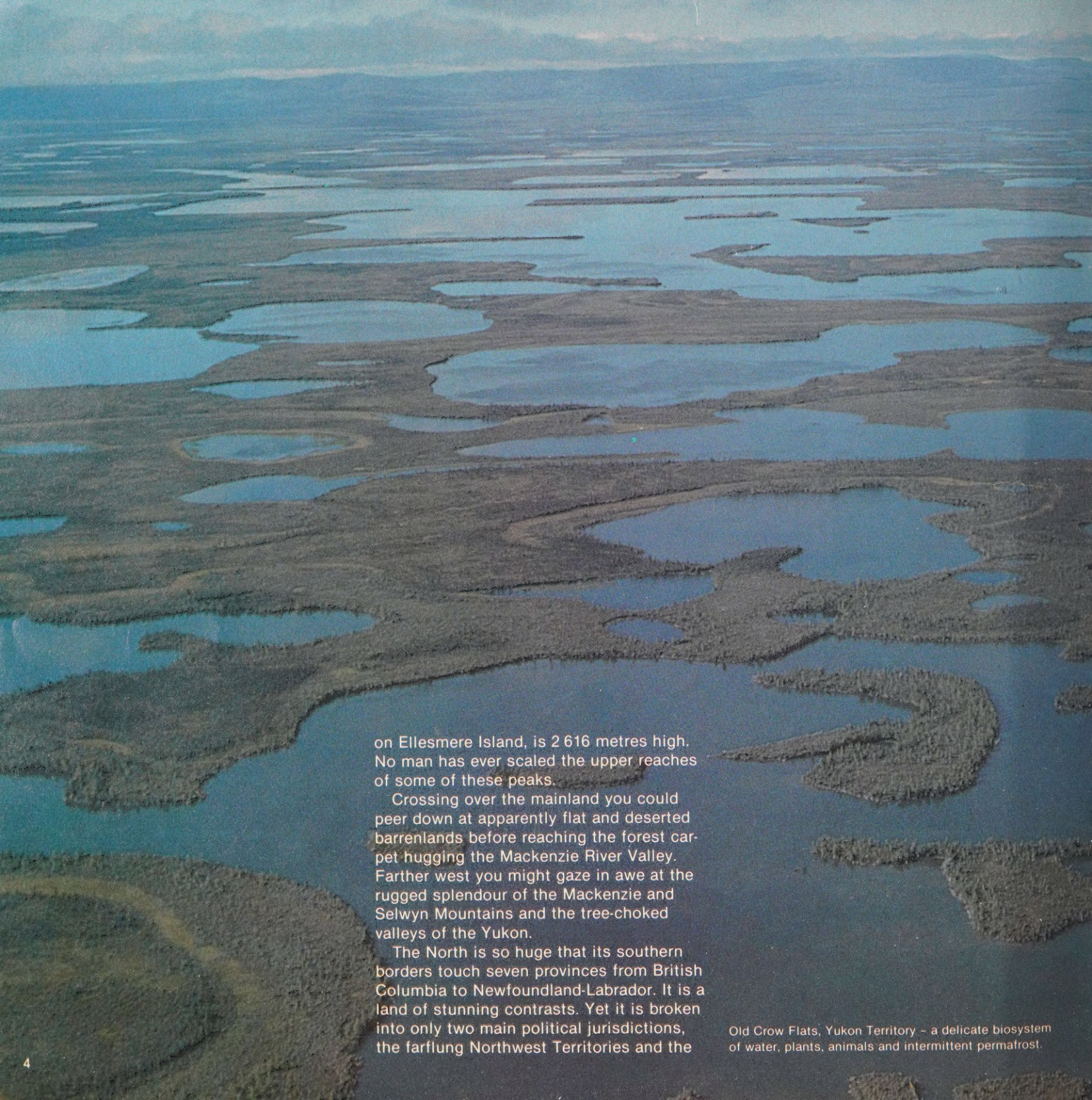
Our North covers an incredible 3 885 000 square kilometres, or 40 per cent of Canada, the world's second largest country. From east to west it stretches 4 256 kilometres and from the North Pole to the 60th parallel it is 3 560 kilometres long.

Flying high in the sky on a crystal clear day is the best way to gain a real appreciation of its immensity. Imagine if it was possible to fly in a modern jet aircraft from Cape Dyer on the east side of Baffin Island to Beaver Creek, Yukon, Canada's westernmost community. You would be in the air at least five hours. Or, if you could make the trip in a single-engine Otter, one of the bush planes that helped to open the North,

you would be airborne for three eight-hour days, perhaps longer.

En route you would pass over the Arctic Islands, some larger than several European countries. If you veered north, you would catch a glimpse of the polar ice pack, the floating ice continent that moves imperceptibly on a perpetual clockwise journey around the Pole. You would also see magnificent mountains with icy peaks towering high above the islands. One, Barbeau Peak





on Ellesmere Island, is 2 616 metres high. No man has ever scaled the upper reaches of some of these peaks.


Crossing over the mainland you could peer down at apparently flat and deserted barrenlands before reaching the forest carpet hugging the Mackenzie River Valley. Farther west you might gaze in awe at the rugged splendour of the Mackenzie and Selwyn Mountains and the tree-choked valleys of the Yukon.

The North is so huge that its southern borders touch seven provinces from British Columbia to Newfoundland-Labrador. It is a land of stunning contrasts. Yet it is broken into only two main political jurisdictions, the farflung Northwest Territories and the

Old Crow Flats, Yukon Territory - a delicate biosystem of water, plants, animals and intermittent permatrost.



smaller Yukon Territory that touches Alaska near the Pacific Ocean. A third jurisdiction is involved when you consider the Ungava Peninsula of Northern Quebec, which juts across the 60th parallel just south of Baffin Island.

A landscape photograph showing a valley with a treeline, mountains in the background, and pink flowers in the foreground. The foreground is filled with vibrant pink flowers and green foliage. In the middle ground, a line of dark evergreen trees marks the treeline. Beyond the treeline, the land is a mix of brown and green, leading up to a range of mountains under a cloudy sky.


Taiga and Tundra

A simple way to look at the North is to divide it into two basic geographical areas: taiga and tundra. The taiga is the broad boreal forest belt that girds the world's sub-Arctic zone. The tundra is the wind-swept, rocky Arctic region where extreme climate has stunted vegetation and where trees do not grow.

You need not have a sextant, compass or map to find the dividing line. The division is the treeline, plain to see and winding unevenly southeast from the Mackenzie Delta on the Beaufort Sea to the northeast tip of Manitoba at Hudson Bay. On the east side of the Bay, the treeline reverses itself and runs northeast to Ungava Bay.

South of the treeline are the forests familiar to most Canadians, the trees marching taller toward the south. North is the barren land, a misnomer to say the least, 'The Land of the Little Sticks,' or the land of no trees at all.

The treeline, in its own way, is an impressive border as a Great Divide of the Rocky



Mountains. It is a division not only of topography, climate, soil and wildlife habitat, but of lifestyle and philosophy. It also is a temperature line. North of the trees the mean July temperature is less than 10 degrees Celsius, the minimum temperature required for growth of tall vegetation.

It sounds strange to say but the Arctic, and to a lesser extent the sub-Arctic, is a huge frozen desert.

Here there are places where the annual precipitation is the same as at Cairo, Egypt. Rainfall can range from a meagre two centimetres a year to 20 centimetres. Of course, it is considerably heavier in the forest region such as the southeast Yukon.

Also, contrary to the usual vision of the North as a deep, white wilderness, snowfall is light. The annual snowfall in the Arctic can be as little as 30 centimetres, the amount that Edmonton, Ottawa or Montreal can receive in a one-day blizzard.

Another myth about the North is the severity of the cold. No one who has stood on the barrens in mid-January will argue

Imposter Highway cuts north-east from the central through to the Mackenzie Delta in the Northwest.

that it is not cold, but there are colder places in the world. The cold is dry and is not really severe unless it is combined with a cutting wind. Actually, on many days the temperatures up North are not much lower than the coldest days on the Prairies.

The cold lasts longer, however. It has been estimated that it takes one-third more fuel to heat a home in the southern Yukon

than in Ottawa, almost three times as much in Inuvik, N.W.T., near the Arctic Coast. The persistent cold also makes it more expensive to operate machinery.

The coldest temperature ever recorded in the North was minus 62 Celsius at Snag, Yukon, in February, 1947. That's cold, but in Siberia the thermometers have been

known to go mad at minus 75. Generally winter temperatures north of 60 range between four and minus 58 Celsius in the southern areas, and slightly lower farther north.

Summers are brief, but pleasant. That's because of the clear, sunny skies and scanty rainfall. The average temperature in July, the warmest month, is usually less



Ice and rock – the basic elements of a harsh and fragile land.

than 10 Celsius in the Arctic, moderating slightly as one travels south. Occasionally the mercury will soar to 32 above and when it does, you know the meaning of hot and dry.

That kind of weather is appreciated because summer is as brief as one month in places like Eureka, on the Fosheim Penin-

sula of Ellesmere Island, 4 600 km north of Toronto.

Extending the pleasantness of summer is the brightness of the midnight sun, which marks the invisible Arctic Circle at 66 degrees 33 minutes north latitude. Here is the southerly limit of the land where the sun

does not set for one or more days during summer and does not rise for one or more days during winter. All of which means that during winter in many parts of the Arctic there is little or no sun for three months and almost three months of continuous sun in summer.







All that darkness makes for a horrible way to spend winter, you might say. But it's not as bad as you might think. The aurora borealis, those flashing coloured strobe lights of the North, plus moonlight, starlight and the clarity of Arctic nights give enough light for many normal activities.

During the long, bright days of summer the land's surface is unlocked from the freezing grip of a northern phenomenon – permafrost, or, permanently frozen ground. This rock-hard mixture of soil, stone and ice cannot be penetrated by water or roots. Core samples of permafrost may look like a marble cake or a chocolate parfait. It covers much of the North and creates grave problems for travel and construction.

The surface permafrost thaw varies. It may leave a few inches of spongy soil in one area, and deep, oozing bogs in another. Because the ground below remains frozen – to depths of 500 metres in places – there



Left Pingos – giant upswellings with cores of solid ice – dot the Mackenzie Delta.

Right Miles of caverns have been carved through the rock canyon walls by the South Nahanni River.

is no subsurface drainage for water. A tracked vehicle driven across a thawed area, therefore, will leave scars for years to come.

Much still has to be learned about permafrost. In earlier days when even less was known, houses and roads were built direct-

ly on top of it. Freezing and thawing convulsed the ground and often left buildings leaning at weird angles.

Permafrost also creates blisters or boils on the earth. Giant blisters called pingos

rise as high as 60 metres on the flats of the Mackenzie Delta.

The general rule now is to insulate permafrost from any heat generated by man-



ctic cotton grass has been used for centuries by the Inuit as wicks for animal oil lamps.

made structures. Where buildings must be erected on permafrost wooden piles are driven deep with the aid of steam and the floors are built about three feet off the ground. This leaves an insulating barrier of cold air.

Another problem posed by permafrost is bringing water and sewage services to buildings. Many northern settlements have water tanks and honey buckets in each

building because of the tremendous expense of overcoming the problem. Inuvik has a utilidor system — above ground conduit boxes that carry pipes from one building to another.





A Land of Life

All of this paints the North as a desolate, inhospitable part of the world. It's not true. Foreboding, isolated and cruel at times, but not desolate and inhospitable.

The northern environment is delicate but it is rich in living things. There are over 800 known flowering plants and ferns in the Canadian Arctic; none of which is thorny or poisonous. In summer, hillsides riot with bright orange lichen, and the blooming of red saxifrage, white Arctic cotton, bright Arctic poppies or purple fireweed.

At least 75 different species of birds fly to the Arctic shores each summer to breed, joining the featherfooted ptarmigan, owls, coal black ravens and some gulls that

reside there year round. One crazy commuter, the tern, loves the Arctic so much that he flies from the Antarctic each summer. That's an amazing return flight of 22 000 kilometres a year!

Out on the land and the sea ice are the permanent dwellers, the life-giving caribou, the massive polar bear, the mouse-like lemming, the Arctic fox and the large white hare. Also there is that throwback to an ancient times, the musk-oxen with its masses of wool, softer and warmer than the finest cashmere.

Although man barely has begun to probe the mysteries of the Arctic Ocean, we already know that the great northern sea is full of life. The largest forms of life, the sea mammals such as whales, walrus and seals, still can be seen quite readily though



their numbers are not as large as they once were. All are part of the Arctic's delicate life chain, a fine and fragile thread that leads out of the permafrost itself. The frozen ground traps precious droplets of water that nourish miniature plants. The

plants nourish the insects and rodents, which in turn feed the birds. And so on.

And, speaking of insects. Anyone who does not believe that the North is alive should stroll across the tundra on a warm summer morning. Each footfall will produce a cloud of buzzing, stinging mosquitoes, the likes of which are rarely seen in the south.

Two muskoxen (left) graze in a field provides a continuing source of food for the local native people.



The People

If the land and the wildlife on the North are varied, so are the people. Yet they are few, like grains of salt scattered across a huge banquet table. All the peoples of the Northwest Territories and Yukon, Inuit, Indian, Metis and non-native, could be placed inside the Olympic Stadium at Montreal and there still would be 7 000 or more empty seats.

In total, there were 71 184 persons in the two territories in December, 1979, with a population of over 77 000 projected beyond 1981. They constituted .28 per cent of the Canadian population.

Native people form the majority in the Northwest Territories. Of a total population of 46 063, there are 28 422 native people - 8 433 Indians, 15 849 Inuit and approximately 4 500 Metis.

The Yukon population of 25 121 includes 3 240 Indians and 1 200 Metis.

Once lands of a nomadic people, the Yukon and Northwest Territories now have their populations gathered into numerous settlements across the North. More than one-half of northern residents live in major centres.

The principal communities are Whitehorse, the Yukon capital with an October 1980 population of 17 002, and Yellowknife, the N.W.T. capital with 9 918. Both capitals are situated in the southern sections of their respective territories.

Outside Whitehorse, the Yukon communities are scarcer and smaller than in the neighboring N.W.T. The lead-zinc mining town of Faro is new and had 1 796 persons in 1980 while the gold rush boom town of Dawson City is a mere ghost of its former self. Its population has dwindled to 1 201 from 40 000 at the height of the 1898 rush. It is slightly larger than Watson lake, the south-eastern Alaska Highway community of 1 417 residents.

Four Northwest Territories communities outside Yellowknife have populations above 2 000. The Mackenzie Delta exploration town of Inuvik had 2 812 residents in 1979, while Hay River, a supply staging area on the south shore of Great Slave Lake, had 3 345. Fort Smith, an administration centre on the N.W.T. - Alberta border, had 2 234 and the eastern Arctic administrative town of Frobisher Bay on Baffin Island had 2 454.

In all, there are not many more than 75 communities or settlements dotting the immense expanse of the North.

When, how and from where did the ancestors of these northern Canadians come? The Metis are products of marriages between Indians and Europeans who came as explorers, fur traders and settlers. The Inuit and Indians have lived there for hundreds of decades.

Anthropologists say that man has lived in the North American Arctic for 5 000 years or more, a rather remarkable feat when you consider the hard climate and the lack of modern technology to soften it. But the Inuit and Indians invented their own survival systems and tools.

Archaeologists generally feel that the ancestors of the present-day Inuit came from the area now known as Siberia, across the former Bering Strait land bridge. The Indians probably came the same route, but penetrated to the southern plains, away from the cold Arctic weather.

The two groups did not mix. Tribal wars and other factors on the plains pushed some of the Indians north. They seldom spent much time beyond the treeline and the Inuit seldom left the tundra.

The Indians who occupy the Yukon and Mackenzie River Valley are mainly of the Athapaskan language group that extends



Carefully piled stones - called inukshooks - serve as markers and guide posts to Inuit throughout the North.



south to New Mexico and Arizona. It had seven tribes in the Yukon and N.W.T.; the Hare, Dogrib, Slave, Chipewyan, Kutchin, Nahanni and Yellowknife.

Of the Indians, Inuit and Metis, the Inuit probably are the most widely recorded because of their adaptation to what the Europeans considered an almost impossible climate. The Inuit is ingenious, well known for their ability to improvise and invent.

Take the igloo – a simple structure that can be constructed in one hour using nothing more than a wind-hardened patch of snow and a long knife made of tusk or bone. It provides solid shelter from the screaming Arctic winds and super insulation against the cold. It is the invention of the Canadian Inuit.

The kayak, hunting canoe, and the umiak – the large wood and skin travelling boat – are other examples of how the Inuit made what they needed with limited raw materials.

One story of a hunt not long ago illustrates the ingenuity of the Inuit.

The snowmobile rapidly has replaced the dogsled because it allows Inuit hunters to travel faster and farther afield in less time. Three hunters from Coppermine on Coronation Gulf set off across the sea ice on two snowmobiles. One machine quit and the men pushed on with the remaining machine, which was new and in good condition.

Miles away from the settlement the second machine snapped a drive shaft, leaving the hunters with no transport except their feet. One hunter set off to get help. The other two, with virtually no tools or equipment, worked in plunging temperatures and fashioned a new shaft from a rifle barrel. They got the machine running and not far from home picked up their companion who was close to death.

The Indians were inventors in their own right. They made birchbark canoes for summer travel and had snowshoes, toboggans or dogsleds for going through the soft, deep snows of the forest. They also had elaborate fish seines and the Yukon Indians used their remarkable fish wheel for trapping salmon.

Contact with the Europeans began about 400 years ago. But it was well into the 19th

century before white society brought widespread change to Indian life and well into the 20th century when the Inuit began to be affected.

As early as 1508, Sebastian Cabot sailed to the North looking for the Northwest Passage to Asia. He was followed by Martin Frobisher in 1576, John Davis in 1585 and others. The search hit its climax in 1845 when Sir John Franklin and his two-ship crew of 129 disappeared mysteriously in the Arctic ice. Search and rescue missions after the Franklin expedition charted many previously unknown parts of the Arctic.

Meanwhile, the quest for furs had started on the mainland. Samuel Hearne, between 1769 and 1772, walked across the tundra from Hudson Bay to the mouth of the Coppermine River on the Arctic Coast. Later, in 1789, Alexander Mackenzie of the North West Company traced the great river named for him.

The fur companies began establishing the first European settlements in the North. Some would be abandoned, others would thrive to become communities of the modern north.

The invasion from the south brought different philosophies, strange concepts of the land and its treasures, new religions and previously-unknown illnesses. The North would never be the same.

Today, exploration rigs, construction crews and a variety of modern technologies are continuing to shrink the boundaries of the North. Native populations are centered on communities and the opportunities for living off the land have been diminishing.

Fewer people continue to live off the land exclusively but many still have the yearning and feeling for the land. That is evidenced by native land claims to most of the Northwest Territories and Yukon. These claims are a new and important factor in northern life and we'll talk about them in more detail later.

Left Crystal clear waters of the Klukshu River in the Yukon yield a fine catch of salmon.

Right The igloo: the resourceful use of a harsh environment to provide protection from that environment.







Arctic summer: the community of Coral Harbour on Southampton Island basks in the midnight sun.

The Government

The North has been governed in some form or another since shortly after Confederation. Britain, on July 15, 1870, transferred to the new Canadian government all of Rupert's Land and the North West Territory. These huge chunks of North America included the Yukon and the N.W.T. that we know today, all three prairie provinces and parts of Ontario and Quebec. Ten years later, on July 31, 1880, the Arctic Islands were turned over.

The boundaries of the northwest shifted rapidly. Gradually, the western provinces came into being, Manitoba in 1874, Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905.

The 1896 gold strike at Bonanza Creek left the Yukon throbbing with activity. Two years later, in 1898, the Yukon district of the N.W.T. became a separate territory with its own Commissioner and appointed council of six. By 1912 northern Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba had taken on their present dimensions.

Its size drastically reduced, the N.W.T. had its government restructured. The 1905 N.W.T. Amendment Act provided for the appointment of a Commissioner and an appointed council of up to four members. The seat of government would be Ottawa. Little was done under the changes, however. The N.W.T. entered 'The Big Sleep' and no council was appointed, nor was any legislation passed for 15 years.

It was not until 1921 that the present government of the Northwest Territories really got its beginning. Oil was the reason.

When Alexander Mackenzie made his historic journey down the Mackenzie River he noted that there were oil seepages in the area of what is now called Norman Wells, just west of Great Bear Lake.

One hundred and thirty-one years later, Imperial Oil struck the black gold 80 kilometres downriver from Fort Norman and touched off a revival of interest in the North.

A legislative council for the territory then was appointed. The territory was so remote and distances so great, however, that reactivating the government caused little stir outside Ottawa. Many of the native people did not even know the government existed.

Another strike, this time gold in Yellowknife, provided more impetus in the late 1930s. Government might have grown then but the Second World War intervened.

The war brought changes to the North in the form of roads and military installations. After it was over, the great frozen land gained a special importance and change in government became a reality.

In 1947 J.G. McNiven became the first northern resident appointed to the N.W.T. territorial council and in 1951 council membership was expanded to eight, three of





them elected. Three years later another elected member was added making the council a body of five federal government appointees and four elected persons.

The balance of power reversed in 1966 when council was increased to 12 with seven elected members and five appointees. Simonie Michael of Frobisher Bay became the first elected Inuk (the singular for Inuit). In 1975, the council became a fully-elected body of 15 persons, the majority of them Inuit, Indian and Metis. In 1979, 22 persons were elected to the N.W.T. Council (commonly referred to as the Legislative Assembly), 14 of whom were native.

Because of the Klondike, which made Dawson City the largest community in the West, the Yukon Territory skipped some of the stages of government development seen in the Northwest Territories. In 1899, at the height of the gold rush fever, the Yukon had a territorial council of seven, two elected. This increased to 10, five elected and five appointed in 1909, and three years later it was a wholly-elected group.

The bubble burst suddenly. The rush waned and people began to move out. The territory suddenly found that its political development was far ahead of what was required. The federal Parliament in 1918 made it possible for the federal cabinet to abolish the council, but instead

it was reduced to a three-person elected body.

That's the way things remained while the Yukon slumbered through its own version of 'The Big Sleep'. It was awakened suddenly by the U.S. Army's Alaska Highway construction during the Second World War. Boom times again brought the territorial council to life and it grew to five members in 1951, seven in 1960 to the present-day number of 15 elected members, and as in the N.W.T., the Council is now commonly referred to as the Legislative Assembly.

The Yukon and the Northwest Territories are different in many respects but both basically are governed in the same manner. Each has a Commissioner appointed by the federal government to be the chief executive officer of the Territory. The Commissioner is responsible to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Each territory has an executive body which sits as a quasi-provincial cabinet. The executive sets policy and each member of the executive has ministerial responsibilities for one or more government departments.

In the Yukon, five members of the elected legislature serve on the executive council which is fully appointed by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the Government Leader. This change was introduced along with party politics and differs from the N.W.T. where the executive committee is made up of the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner and five elected legislature members appointed by the Commissioner.

The councillors chosen by the people advise the territorial government and make laws suggested by themselves or by the administration. The Commissioner cannot spend territorial government funds without legislature approval.

The scope of the territorial governments is almost as wide as any provincial government. They have active roles in education, local government, game resources, works, social and economic affairs and other provincial fields of endeavour. Their powers are fewer, however, and the federal government retains control over most territorial natural resources.

Centrifuge - writer. The structures here suggest one virtually infinite frontier story.

Simply stated, the territories gradually have been assuming the responsibilities and trappings of provincial governments. They are on the road to responsible government. The timing for entering provincehood, or perhaps some new type of alternative, will be decided by Parliament after consultation with the peoples of the territories, and the general Canadian population.

Each territory has representation in the House of Commons and both have a representative in the Senate. Willy Adams of Rankin Inlet was named the first N.W.T. Senator in 1977 and became the first Inuk to serve in the upper house. Paul Lucier, a former Whitehorse mayor, became the first Yukon Senator in 1975. In the 1978 general

federal election two Members of Parliament were elected from the N.W.T., one from the west side and one from the east. One MP represents the Yukon.

As yet there is no formally established system of party politics in the Northwest Territories. In the Yukon, however, the 1978 territorial election was conducted along party lines and a majority government was elected.

Interestingly, although the Yukon always has had its seat of government at home – first in Dawson City, then in Whitehorse – it has been only slightly more than 12 years since the N.W.T. government moved from Ottawa.

In the approaching autumn of 1967 Stuart Hodgson, former union leader from the West Coast and newly-appointed Commissioner, moved his office and fledgling government into quarters at Yellowknife. There a sign proclaimed that the N.W.T. government had arrived and a small staff began work.

Today both territorial governments are operating from modern office buildings. The Yukon government is housed on a bank of the Yukon River and the N.W.T. government is in the Arthur Laing Building at one of Yellowknife's main intersections. The



latter building is named for a former Minister of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources.

Compared with the Yukon, which developed in fits and starts over one-half a century, government and social changes in the N.W.T. have been meteoric. The native people, especially the Inuit, have been encouraged to settle into communities. Houses, schools, social centres, churches and government offices have popped up at a spectacular rate.

School Bells

One of the main advantages of drawing populations into communities was education. High unemployment is a feature of life in many parts of the North today and one of the problems is that when jobs do

become available a lot of northerners do not have the education or skills to fill them.

The reasons can be argued, but the fact is that the North is turning more to wage economy, and living off the land is becoming more and more difficult. Education and training in some skill or other is becoming a must for many northerners. That is not to say that traditional hunting, fishing and trapping are dead. In fact, there has been a resurgence of the hunting life-style in the north.

Twenty-five years ago or more, a variety of authorities not necessarily related, were operating schools in the North. Classes were irregular and curricula varied from place to place. Adult education did not exist. Teaching methods and teaching tools were based on life in the southern white society.

Improving the system was no cinch. People were spread out into small groups. School construction costs were too high to put a new school and teacher in every sparsely populated settlement. Residential schools, where children had to be away from home for the better part of each year, appeared to be one of many solutions. However, the children and their parents disliked the boarding school system.

These days there is a decline in residential school enrolment because of the extension of grades taught in the smaller communities. The number of students in N.W.T. residential schools in 1970 was 1 180. In 1977, it was down to 439.



The days of animal hide houses in summer and igloos in winter as permanent residences have departed in the North as can be seen in both winter and summer at Resolute Bay.

Traditional values and pursuits are maintained proudly in the North – from caribou hunting (*upper left*) and trapping (*lower left*) to cultural expressions found in print-making (*upper right*) – but in competition with southern values, will they be passed along to the youth (*lower right*)?



Native teaching assistants are being used and land-life skills are being included in the curricula. Native languages are being taught, and, the "Dick, Jane and Spot" textbooks are being replaced with teaching aids that talk of northern people, polar bears and caribou.

Adult education and continuing and special education now are a part of the northern school system.

In the 1978-79 school year there were close to 19 000 persons enrolled in elementary and secondary schools across the N.W.T. and Yukon. That's almost one-third of the entire northern population.



Red Coats on the White Snow

In a thicket-choked valley deep in the Yukon or on the rocky, wave-battered shores of an Arctic Island, the Maple Leaf flag snaps proudly in the stiff northern breeze. Below it, or not far from it, there is a representative of the agency that has exercised a powerful and varied influence over the North for almost 100 years - the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Many arms of government are at work in the North today but for many years lone RCMP officers together with a scattering of missionaries, were the only government. They were the law, the administrators of government, the counsellors of people with problems. They acted as immigration officers, coroners, census takers, recorders of births and deaths, postmasters and mail carriers, game officers, and of course the symbols of Canadian sovereignty over the North. They even pulled teeth, when necessary.

Some of these roles also were performed by Hudson's Bay Co. personnel, church missionaries and later government officers.

The Northwest Mounted Police were keeping law and order in the Northwest more than 20 years before the first frenzied shouts of 'gold' echoed along the creeks of the Klondike. The Great Rush of '98 catapulted the force into the public spotlight and helped to make it famous throughout the world.

Men like Sam Steele, the adventure-seeking Mountie who followed settlement across the Canadian West and into the Yukon, did more than maintain the right on the raucous streets of Dawson City. They also stood for Canadian sovereignty in what basically was a rush by Americans for Canadian gold at a time when people didn't care much about borders.

As the Klondike roar turned to a whisper, the RCMP presence was spreading into the Northwest Territories. In 1903, a post was established at Fort McPherson above the Arctic Circle and not far from the Yukon border. Other posts began to appear before the First World War and from these isolated cabins the force set forth on its legendary patrols. From Dawson City to Baker Lake on the west-central barrens, the RCMP were writing a history that never would be paralleled by any other police force.

The Mounties were such an important factor in the North that the RCMP Commissioner also was Commissioner of the N.W.T. from 1905 to 1919. Until 1960, each Commissioner of the force was an appointed member of the Northwest Territories council.

The dogteam patrols have vanished and the force had 331 persons in the North at the end of 1977, some patrolling on snowmobiles and Twin-Otter aircraft. Constables were being trained to be sensitive to the native lifestyle and more than two dozen special native constables were employed. The RCMP's beat ranges from the oil exploration camps along the Beaufort Sea to the busy streets of Yellowknife where highrise buildings overlook flashing traffic signals.

Despite the dawn of the technological age in the North, a problem of the dogteam days still exists for the RCMP. They are ex-

pected to uphold laws moulded in southern legislatures and courts, laws foreign to the philosophy of the Indians and Inuit. Sometimes they must bend the laws to fit the circumstances.

A Man Called Ekoktoegee

On October 15, 1955, an aircraft droned in lazily from Fort Smith and set down at Yellowknife airport. The door swung open and a balding, stern-looking man wearing severe rimless glasses emerged. Mr. Justice Jack Sissons, 63, first judge of the new Territorial Court of the Northwest Territories had arrived, and a remarkable period in Canadian jurisprudence and northern life began.

Previously, much of the justice in the N.W.T. had been administered from the south. Jack Sissons, an Orillia, Ontario boy with a long-time yearning for the North, was determined to change that. Starting with the basic principle that justice be taken to every man's door, he set off on a 11-year northern career that brought the fledgling court to the farthest corners of the North. He also set precedents for future developments.

Probably his greatest precedent was the one already established by some individual



A mile from the age of exploration, Captain J.E. Berry built this cabin in Wainwright Harbour in the 19th century.

RCMP officers – that the law had to be bent to meet northern situations. It was a principle vigorously followed by his successor Mr. Justice William Morrow, who served 10 years on the northern bench and was succeeded in 1976 by Mr. Justice Cal Tallis.

Flying in rough bush aircraft in the worst of weather, Justice Sissons did bring the judicial system to the native people. He unabashedly admitted being in the front lines for the struggle over native rights and for more responsible government in the North. He bent the law to embrace different cultures and some of his rulings went before the Supreme Court of Canada. To the Inuit he became known as Ekoktoegeee, The One Who Listens To Things.

Justice Sissons tried many important cases but one gives a brief and valuable insight into life and justice North of 60. That is the case of Kikkik, who stood trial in 1958 for the murder of her half-brother, for criminal negligence in the death of her

young daughter and for abandonment of another child.

Kikkik and her family were Ihalmiut, inland Inuit, from the Ennadai Lake area of the central barrens not far north of the Manitoba-Saskatchewan borders. Her family and that of her half-brother Ootuk were caught out on the barrens with little food. Ootuk, for reasons not yet totally understood, shot Hallow, Kikkik's husband. Kikkik then fatally stabbed Ootuk.

Widowed and without food, Kikkik tried to guide her five children across the snows to a Hudson's Bay Post 64 kilometres away. After eight days on the trail she left two of the children in an igloo. Before rescue came, one child, age three died.

At the murder trial, defence counsel Sterling Lyon, now Manitoba premier, argued that the only conclusion Kikkik could have drawn was that Ootuk also planned to kill her and her children. Justice Sissons told the jury that justice demanded

that they revert to an earlier age and try to understand Kikkik's life, land and society.

The verdict was not guilty, but Kikkik then had to stand trial on the other two charges.

Kikkik had abandoned her two children on the morning of the day she was rescued. They were still alive in the igloo but she said they had died during the night. Rescuers sent to find the bodies found one of the children still alive.

Kikkik's explanation was short and simple. The children could not walk and she had dragged them a long way. She did not tell the rescuers they were alive because she was afraid.

Justice Sissons said later the excuse would not be good enough in white society. But Inuit society was vastly different and Kikkik probably was genuinely afraid that she would be punished for revealing that she had abandoned two children in hopes of saving the others.

The jury found her not guilty on both counts.





Wings Above the Tundra

No one thing has done more to shrink the hugeness of the North than that remarkable invention the flying machine. Voyages that once spanned months, created hardships and cost human lives are being made in less than a day. There is no place in the North that cannot be reached by some sort of flying machine.

Airlines such as CP Air, Transair, Pacific Western and Nordair are flying daily into Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Inuvik, Resolute and Frobisher Bay, plus other northern centres. Smaller companies offer scheduled service into Dawson City, Eskimo Point, Rankin Inlet, Coppermine; numerous places considered remote less than a decade ago. Charters are available to go almost anywhere.

Aircraft bring supplies that used to come once a year. They fly court staff and

government administrators to the people, bring medical and dental care and supplies, take people to hospitals and make written communication a few days away instead of many months away.

The North, to a great extent, is what it is today because of flying, and flying owes a lot of its advances to the North. It was there that Canadians earned their reputations as some of the world's most skilled and rugged flyers.



The Canadian Arctic flying saga began in 1921 with the Imperial Oil Norman Wells strike. The company ordered two Junkers to be flown north from New York. There were misadventures but one of the planes reached Great Bear Lake and the airplane began its career as a working fixture of the North.

In the early and mid-1920s more aircraft entered the northern skies, Fokkers and Fairchilds and others whose progeny are crisscrossing the North today. At their con-

trols were men such as 'Punch' Dickens and 'Wop' May, men who would become legends in their own time.

May, flying for Commercial Airways in 1930, pioneered the first airmail service the length of the Mackenzie, 1 920 kilometres from Fort McMurray, Alta., to Aklavik on the Delta.

At the same time, pilots like Ted Field, Jim Finnegan, Andy Cruickshank, Clyde Wann were opening the air routes of the Yukon. Grant McConachie, later President

of CP Air, was pioneering the radio compass that became so vital to air navigation.

Suddenly it became evident that the aircraft would become the greatest man-made modern tool in the Arctic. It certainly was evident on a frigid day in February, 1932, when the RCMP used an aircraft for the first time in tracking down their man.

The helicopter is just one aspect of modern technology that has revolutionized travel and exploration in the North.



The Mad Trapper of Rat River

The air was so still that day that 'Wop' May, flying a single-engine Bellanca monoplane over the Yukon's meandering Eagle River, could hear the rifle shots ringing above the roar of the aircraft's huge engine. He nosed low over an unmoving figure in the snow, then tipped the wings to signal the posse spread out along the river. The signal meant that Albert Johnson, the mad trapper who had outrun and outwitted a combined force of white trappers, Indians and RCMP in a 48-day running battle, was dead.

Johnson, a strange and mysterious man, had roamed the North alone, living off the land, trapping and perhaps searching for lost mines.

People saw or heard little of him until New Year's Eve of 1931 when two RCMP constables went to ask him about a complaint that he had been springing another man's traps. The police had visited Johnson's Rat River log cabin near the N.W.T.-Yukon border earlier, but he had refused to let them in or to speak to them.

They returned with a search warrant and were greeted by a gunshot blast through the cabin door. Const. Albert 'Buns' King was hit and only a 20-hour mad dash overland to Aklavik saved the Mountie's life. Over the next six weeks Johnson led other posses on an incredible snowshoe and dog-team chase that left the pursuers, hardy and wise bushmen, totally amazed at the fugitive's ability to survive such an ordeal without decent shelter, food or fire.

There were more shootouts and one officer, Edgar 'Spike' Millen, was hit in the heart by Johnson's powerful 30-30 Savage.

Although no one believed that he would try, Johnson struck out across the snow-shrouded Richardson Mountains in the direction of Eagle River. Using dogteams, the RCMP were unable to catch Johnson who was ploughing ahead on heavy home-made snowshoes. They had a constant problem supplying food for the dogs and men. Finally, they decided to order up an aircraft.

People scoffed. Aircraft had not been used in manhunts before. Conditions were difficult, and landing and taking off on skis, without airstrips, was dangerous.

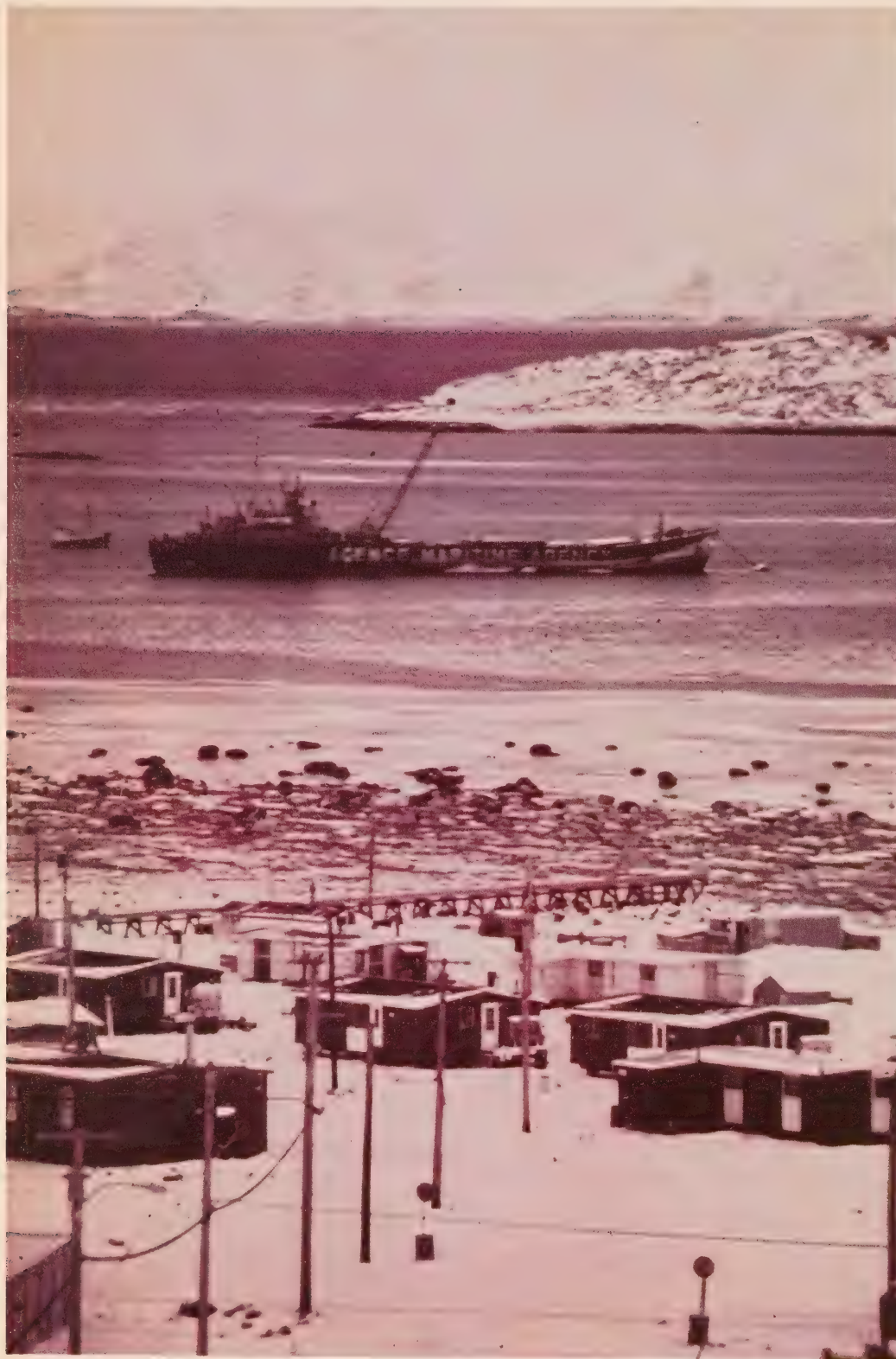
May, a double ace in the First World War, joined the search with the Bellanca on February 7. He ferried hundreds of pounds of supplies to the searchers and constantly looked for the mad trapper's trail. No longer hampered by the supply problem, the posse closed in on Johnson and took him during a raging gun battle on the frozen river.

The airplane once again had shown its value and in the years to come it would be the central object in many a northern saga. Tributes and monuments to the aircraft and their pilots can be found throughout the North, and one is the Bellanca Building, housing federal offices in downtown Yellowknife.



Left Aeons-old glacier feed Wolfe Creek on Ellesmere Island.

Right Forty kilometres from Coronation Gulf, the Hood River plunges into a gorge, forming Wilberforce Falls.



The North Today

For all the advantages the airplane has provided, it still has not solved one of the North's most serious transportation problems – cost. Air travel makes the North smaller by the day, bringing people and their communities closer to each other. But the price is high and in some areas of northern development it is prohibitive.

Goods brought in by air are more expensive than those carried by road, rail or ship. The farther north cargoes must be flown, the higher the freight charges.

Take vegetables, which are not yet grown commercially in the North. The price of fresh vegetables in Frobisher Bay has been as much as 170 percent higher than in Yellowknife. In Grise Fiord, at the southern tip of Ellesmere Island, the prices have been, on occasion 1 118 percent above those in Yellowknife. The Anti-Inflation Board estimated in December, 1977, that it cost \$72.54 a week for a sample food basket to feed a family of four in Yellowknife. That was the highest of all Canadian cities surveyed but it was the lowest in the Northwest Territories. The cost in Montreal, the lowest city surveyed, was \$47.39.


The same applies to other goods. In 1977, fuel oil in Yellowknife cost 22 percent and in Pelly Bay 160 percent more than in Saskatoon. These prices indicate the differences caused by freight charges. In Inuvik, on the other hand, it cost seven percent less because theirs comes from the Norman Wells refinery, halfway up the Mackenzie Valley.

It also costs more to take goods or materials out of the North, which is a damaging blow to development. Huge bodies of ore and other resources lie virtually untouched because it is too expensive to develop and ship them to far-off markets.

The Yukon has impressive lead-zinc, copper and iron deposits not yet being mined and processed because distance makes them economically unfeasible.

Left Frobisher Bay, on Baffin Island, is the major community in the eastern Arctic.

Right Building year-round roads without affecting the environment – especially over permafrost – is a major construction challenge in the North.



These, as well as Arctic oil and gas finds would be marketed if they were located in the south. Because they are so far north, more exploration is needed to find larger reserves that will warrant constructing pipelines or other means of transport.

Alternatives to air transportation do not come easy North of 60. It costs millions upon millions of dollars to build roads or rail lines anywhere these days. Justification for the expenditure of large sums to run a highway or rail line hundreds of kilometres across the North to a settlement of 800 people must often be found in long term development policies rather than immediate cost return.

The White Pass and Yukon Railway running 176 kilometres from Skagway on the Alaska Panhandle to Whitehorse was made possible by the Klondike discovery. It now carries most of the Yukon's resource wealth to the Pacific Coast. There has been talk of extending the line north of Whitehorse but again the problems of economics, distance and population, plus the resource factor, must be carefully considered.

The only other railway North of 60 is the Great Slave line from Alberta to Pine Point, N.W.T., near the southern shore of Great Slave Lake. This 696-kilometre iron link was opened in 1965 and carries lead and zinc south from Pine Point Mines Ltd.

There are two major water transport systems: the annual federal transport department sealift to the Eastern Arctic and Arctic Islands, and the Mackenzie River system. Both have their problems. A third smaller system resupplies the Keewatin by barge from Churchill.

The sealift brings supplies to numerous tiny settlements throughout the eastern and central Arctic. Modern technology, in the form of sturdier and more powerful ice-breakers, now makes the task easier. Still, travelling the ice-clogged Arctic seas seldom is clear sailing.

Originating at Hay River, the Mackenzie River system is a lifeline. Brawny tugs pushing heavily-laden barges supply Mackenzie Valley and western Arctic coastal

communities and bring millions of tons of supplies to exploration firms.

It is a lifeline with a brief annual life span, however. The Mackenzie shipping season to Tuktoyaktuk on the Arctic Coast averages only about 14 weeks each summer between breakup and freeze-up. The system also is difficult to navigate because of shallow water and shifting channels.

Aside from being a vital supply artery, the Mackenzie can offer an unforgettable vacation to the adventurous. The 2 720-kilometre trip from Fort McMurray to Inuvik, or a shorter excursion from Hay River is exciting and memorable. The scenery is majestic.



Above Mountain Avenas is the official flower of the Northwest Territories.

Right Rabbitkettle Hot Springs – a unique geological feature along the South Nahanni River.

Picnic on the Arctic Coast?

A Toronto family can now pack a picnic basket into the family auto and head for the beach at the Mackenzie Delta.

That's a gross exaggeration but the trip is possible with the opening of the Dempster Highway in the northwest Yukon. The Dempster, named for an RCMP inspector, will connect the Dawson City – Whitehorse Klondike Highway with a portion of the Mackenzie Highway built south of Inuvik. The road is the first from the south to cross the Arctic Circle.

From a short hop southeast of Dawson City, the Dempster stretches 550 kilometres to Fort McPherson, just inside the N.W.T. border. It is another 176 kilometres from there to Inuvik.

Construction began in 1959 was completed in 1979. During the 20-year period, \$104 million was spent on the 681 km highway which by southern standards is a rough road. However, it is expected to become a major supply route for both communities and developers, complementing and competing with the Mackenzie water system.

Anyone planning the trip by car should go prepared. From Toronto the return trip will be more than 9 600 kilometres and will take two weeks to cover, based on 800 kilometres a day driving. From Whitehorse to Inuvik there will be 1 200 kilometres of rough gravel road, one way.

Some of the world's most glorious scenery and wildlife viewing is found along the way, but facilities are scarce. It will be wilderness travelling all the way.

The route is also historic. It follows the trail of Inspector William Dempster who in 1911 left Dawson City in search of the famous lost patrol. The four-man patrol went missing between Fort McPherson and Dawson City. Inspector Dempster was ordered to take another dogteam patrol over the route and he found that all four men had perished in the frozen wilderness.

The Dempster will be a resource and community supply road for the time being. All Yukon communities except Old Crow have all-weather road connections, the main one being the Alaska Highway.

The only major road of any length in the N.W.T. is the Mackenzie Highway, from the









N.W.T.-Alberta border to Hay River and Fort Simpson. A spur connects the main Mackenzie route with Yellowknife. Trucks from the south travel this gravel road with most of the supplies used in Hay River, Yellowknife and Fort Simpson. However, supply to Yellowknife reverts to air transport each spring and fall because there is no bridge at the Mackenzie River crossing. Ferries are used during summer and driving across the ice is possible after freeze-up.

The Mackenzie now is complete as far as Camsell Bend, 74 km west of Fort Simpson, and 467 km northwest of Hay River. Eventually it might follow the great river all the way to Inuvik. Construction has been halted 24 km south of Wrigley, 670 km from the N.W.T.-Alberta border. The latest estimate for pushing through to Inuvik is \$300 million.

Other road proposals are on the drawing boards, but for the Northwest Territories at least, it will be many years before road travel is available to all. One proposal that received approval early in January, 1978, is the Liard Highway construction. That road will connect Fort Simpson with Fort Nelson, B.C. on the Alaska Highway by 1983 and will be the first permanent road link between B.C. and the N.W.T.

The Treasure Chest

There is one point about the North over which there is no argument – it is one of the world's great treasure troves of non-renewable resources. There are differences of opinion over how we should be dipping into the treasure and at what speed.

Controversy over the social, economic and environmental aspects of northern resource development likely will be around for some time to come. As in other matters, the Canadian people through the governments they elect, will have to decide the proper course to follow.

Mining continues to be the backbone of the Yukon and Northwest Territories economies. Value of mine production in 1979 was \$413 million in the N.W.T. and \$300 million in the Yukon. Seven N.W.T. mines were milling an average of 12 881 tonnes of ore a day while the three Yukon metal mines were processing 10 750 tonnes. The Yukon also has a small coal mine, several small silver-lead mines and 90 placer gold operations.

The principal ores mined are gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, tungsten, cadmium, bismuth, coal and asbestos.

An interesting development in mining has been the opening of the partly government-owned Nanisivik Mine near Arctic Bay

on the northern end of Baffin Island. The mine and its associated facilities opened in October, 1976, at a cost of \$70 million. In addition to its obvious purpose of extracting the rich lead-zinc orebody, it provides wage employment for eastern Arctic Inuit. The federal government owns 18 percent of Nanisivik and Inuit now make up about 25 percent of the work force.

Another important side of mining North of 60 is exploration. During 1979, mining exploration companies spent \$55 million on the search for metals in the N.W.T. and Yukon.

There has been renewed interest in gold, silver and uranium properties in the N.W.T. and during 1979 there were 1 350 mining claims staked in the territory covering over one million hectares.

In the Yukon, the value of mine production and exploration are increasing. The number of claims staked in 1979 increased by 18.6 percent to 11 326.

Mine production in both territories in 1979 employed 2 972 persons, 1 822 in the N.W.T. and 1 150 in the Yukon. The 90 placer gold mining operations in the Yukon employ 400 people on a seasonal basis. Many more jobs were created by exploration but these are almost impossible to estimate.

Oil and natural gas exploration caused a boom in the North, particularly the N.W.T., during the 70's. The search has slowed somewhat recently but Dome Petroleum's

and Esso's offshore Beaufort Sea project and the Panarctic Oil Ltd. drilling in the Arctic Islands, are proceeding at a brisk pace.

In 1979, there were 30 natural gas wells North of 60. Seven actually were producing.

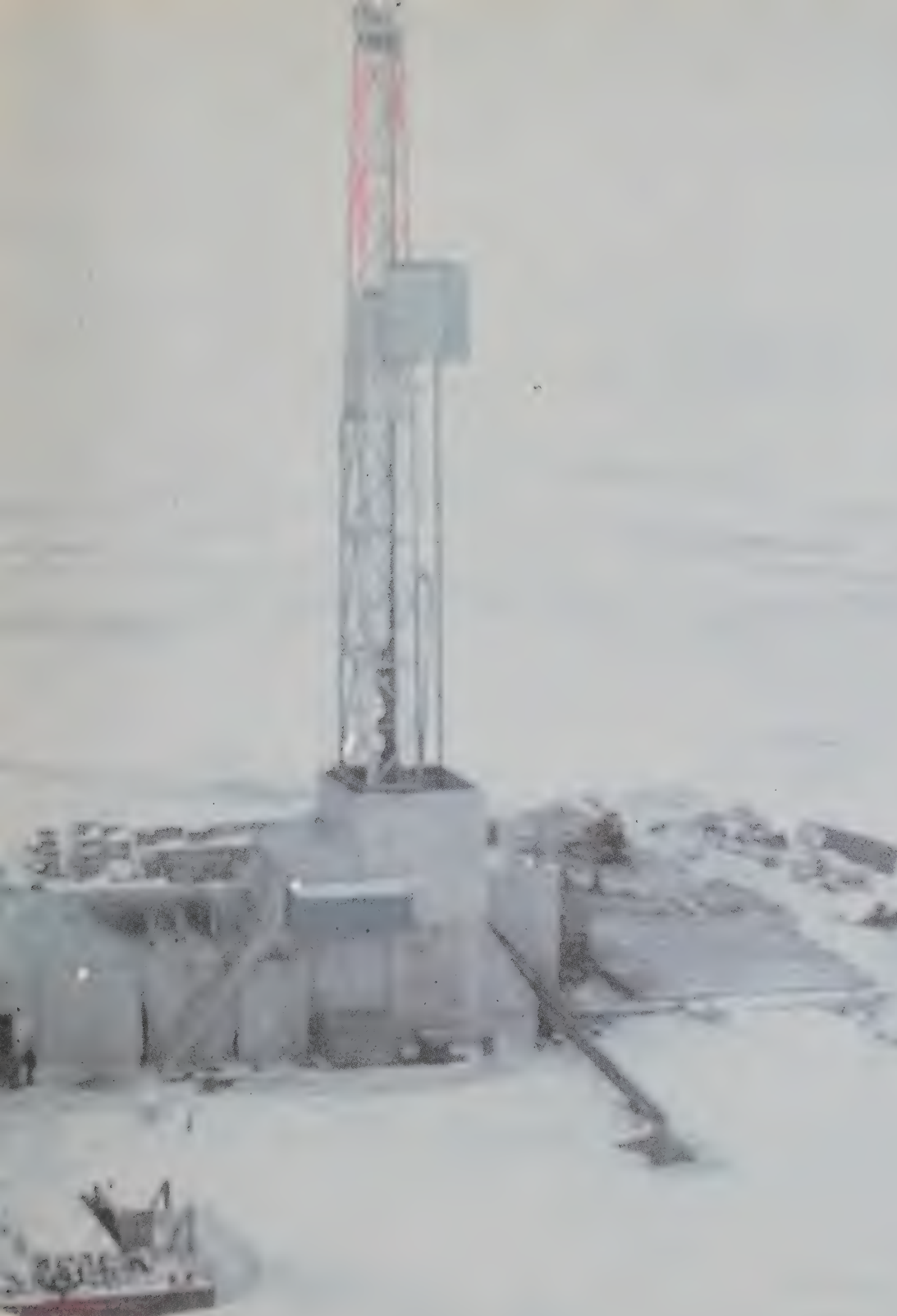
Oil wells numbered 54, with 61 capable of producing and 33 actually producing. The producing wells, or wells with the capability, are at Norman Wells. Norman Wells production in 1979 was 1 499 thousand cubic metres of crude oil and 64.3 million cubic metres of natural gas.

The dollar figures associated with oil and gas exploration in the North boggle the mind. It is estimated that the industry spent \$440 million on northern exploration in 1979. Of this, \$374 million was acceptable for government work credits, and \$66 million was for in-house studies, research and other work. Of the total, \$371 million was spent on well drilling.

Government income from N.W.T. and Yukon oil and gas development in 1979 totalled \$11.1 million.

Estimates of oil and gas reserves are increasing annually and are approaching threshold volumes — the figure necessary to justify transportation systems. This optimism in the petroleum industry suggests that the North does contain enough oil and gas to market commercially in the south in this decade.





Planning for the North's first major pipeline that will carry natural gas from Alaska's North Slope to the lower 48 states, is well advanced. In July 1980 the Canadian government approved financing which cleared the way for start of construction of the so-called "pre-build" or southern portion of the Alaska-Yukon line. By 1985 that line, crossing 800 kilometres of the southwest Yukon and following the general route of the Alaska Highway, will carry Alaska gas to southern markets.

This route was chosen after the federal government in 1977 decided not to approve pipeline construction up the Mackenzie River Valley. The Mackenzie line would have carried the same Alaska gas, and probably Canadian Arctic gas later.

But the Mackenzie line was rejected when the government-appointed Berger Inquiry handed in its recommendations. After an exhaustive 2-year trek to most villages and settlements in the Mackenzie Valley and Western Arctic, Justice Berger offered the government a dramatic two-volume report, - in effect a total repudiation of the pipeline by the people living there. The report recommended that the valley line not be built before ten years, and the National Energy Board, after months of public hearings, also recommended against the pipeline.

The social and economic consequences of the Alaska-Yukon line were studied by a three-person inquiry headed by Kenneth

Vast reserves of hydrocarbons may lie under the earth's crust in the North. Harsh climate and sensitive environment are only two factors that influence the discovery or utilization of these energy sources.



Lysyk, Dean of Law at the University of British Columbia. In 1977, three months of public hearings were held in the Yukon at the same time that an Environmental Assessment Panel was studying the possible impacts of the pipeline on the environment. In 1978, the Northern Pipeline Agency, was established, empowered by an Act of Parliament to oversee the planning and construction of the Canadian portion of the Alaska Highway gas pipeline project. Before construction begins the Agency will have handed down socio-economic and environmental terms and conditions for the construction and operation of the pipeline, and will have taken into account the concerns expressed in the Berger, Lysyk and Hill inquiries, the NEB report and further public hearings. In addition, there is a possibility that natural gas from the Mackenzie Delta area will be carried south in future via a Dempster Highway pipeline connection to the Alaska-Yukon line.

As required under the May, 1978 Dempster Link Agreement between the Government of Canada and Foothills Pipeline Ltd. the company submitted an application to the NEB in June, 1979 to construct the line. The timing for this pipeline depends very largely on the status of the Alaska Highway pipeline, the Canadian portion of which is approved for construction by Foothills Pipelines Ltd.

The government, in any case, will have to weigh the pros and cons before deciding to go ahead with the Dempster lateral. There are many concerns involved. The safeguarding of the Porcupine Caribou Herd is one of them. Other considerations involve what will eventually develop with resources in the Beaufort Sea, Mackenzie Delta and Arctic Islands.

In this regard, the Polar Gas consortium has withdrawn its application to build a pipeline from Melville Island, in the Arctic Archipelago, southward along the west side of Hudson's Bay to a connection with existing systems in northern Ontario.

Left Dome Petroleum drillships and support vessels wend their way through the ice of the Beaufort Sea. *Right* Beluga whales calving in Cunningham Inlet – ecologically sensitive areas like this must be avoided in resource exploration.



Polar Gas is now studying four "Y-line" alternatives. A line from Melville Island running southwest across M'Clure Strait and Victoria Island would connect with several possible routes from the Mackenzie Delta, in the vicinity of Great Bear Lake. Hence the name "Y-line". The trunk line would then run south and southeast to join the existing TransCanada system. The new application is expected mid-summer 1981.

A different type of project to bring gas from the Arctic Islands to southern markets is the Arctic Pilot Project. From the Island a short pipeline would be run to the south coast of Melville Island. There the gas would be liquified and shipped by ice-breaking tankers to an east coast port. An application was filed January, 1979, but withdrawn for revision in July, 1980 because there were major changes to certain parts of the project. The social, economic and environmental aspects of the project were addressed in public hearings in April, 1980.

There are several ways that the first gas from the Arctic could be delivered. It could be moved in liquid form by tanker. Or by pipeline. Such is not the case with the future movement of oil in the Beaufort Sea. Dome Petroleum, the most active operator in the Western Arctic, is studying a number of possible production schemes all of which involve marine transportation of oil by ice-strengthened tankers to southern markets through the Northwest Passage. Dome hopes to have one production platform and two tankers in operation by 1985. After 1985, instead of changing to pipeline transportation, Dome would augment their modes of marine transportation.

Esso Resources plans to expand production of their Norman Wells field and in conjunction with Interprovincial Pipelines submitted applications for field expansion and pipeline to Government in early Spring of 1980. A 12 inch oil pipeline would be constructed from Norman Wells down the Mackenzie Valley to Zama, Alberta. There it would join an existing system and transport 25 000 barrels per day. An Environmental Assessment and Review Panel (EARP) and the National Energy Board have completed public hearings and submitted recommendations to Government by the end of 1980.

Cool, Clear Water

Perhaps the most important renewable resource North of 60 is water. Fifty percent of Canada's fresh water is located there. It is vital for wildlife, transport and industrial and municipal needs. Its potential for hydro-electric power generation is vast.

Unfortunately, although northern waters abound with fish, commercial fishing has been a risky business in the North. The growth rate of fish in the chilly waters is extremely slow, and shipping distances boost costs.

There is no commercial fishery in the Yukon. The primary importance of the fish there is to the native people and the tourism industry.

There have been attempts at commercial fishing in the N.W.T. A fishery on Great Slave Lake began in 1945 and continues to operate. Lake trout and whitefish are caught, flash frozen and exported to the United States, providing a reasonable industry for people in the region. Other small fisheries exist, but in the main, commercial fishing in the North remains a modest industry.



Trapping of furs, of course, was the reason that white society entered the North. But growing opposition in southern urban centres, use of synthetics and declining numbers of many species of fur-bearing animals has led to a decline in the importance of trapping to the northern economy. Once the No. 1 industry, it now ranks far behind mining.

It does, however, continue to be a main source of income for many native people and a source of extra income for hundreds of others. In the 1975-76 season, \$2.7 million worth of fur was trapped in the Northwest Territories alone. The average value over the last 20 years has been approximately \$1.4 million a year.

Another renewable resource, the forests, is not an overly large factor in the northern economy. Much of the N.W.T. is too cold

for forests and much of the Yukon is too high. Again, growth rates are slow, a tree may take 150 to 200 years to mature. Near the treeline, maturity may mean a tree one or two inches in diameter.

There is a reasonable forest area that can be harvested in the more southerly areas. The Yukon and the Mackenzie Valley region contain an estimated 199 000 km² of productive forest. This holds approximately 650 million cubic metres of pulp and saw timber. The most common species are white and black spruce, lodgepole and jack pine, balsam, poplar, trembling aspen and white birch.

A Settling of Accounts

Almost all the northern lands now are subject to land claims submitted to the federal government by the Inuit, Indians and Metis. The native people claim that they have aboriginal rights to the land and that these rights never have been extinguished by treaties. Or, in areas where there were treaties, the treaty provisions were not fulfilled. The majority of northern lands were not covered by treaties.

The pursuit of native claims gained public attention in 1973 when the Nishga Indians of British Columbia brought their fight for recognition of aboriginal land title to the Supreme Court of Canada. They lost on a technicality. The Nishga case indicated, however, that there was a strong argument to be made for aboriginal land rights and the federal government announced its willingness to negotiate land claims.

In 1975 agreement was reached by the federal and provincial governments with the Crees and Inuit of northern Québec. The James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement, proclaimed and made final in October, 1977, gave 6 500 Cree and 4 200 Inuit \$225 million over 20 years.

Muskoxen range through the central Arctic. Game controls have enabled the stocks of this important animal-resource to rebuild in recent years.



Aside from the money settlement, the Cree and Inuit are to own tracts of community lands, with exclusive hunting and trapping rights over large areas. In addition, they are setting up new systems of local government under native control. In return, the Indians and Inuit surrendered aboriginal claim to roughly 981 610 square kilometres.

At present the federal government is negotiating northern claims with the Inuit of the Mackenzie Delta and the Eastern and Central Arctic, the Indians and Metis of the N.W.T. and the Indians of the Yukon.

The claims of the Inuit, of the Indians (the Dene) and the Metis, which were received by the federal government in the mid-1970's, all have many aspects to be negotiated. Underlying all their claims, however, is their desire to have more say in political decision-making.

The Inuit have claimed the central and eastern area of the Northwest Territories above the treeline which they call "Nunavut" (our land). The Inuit say that they want to stay within Confederation, but they want this new territory over which they would have political control. The Dene, too, want political control over their area of claim, the Mackenzie Valley. For these and other reasons Prime Minister Trudeau, in 1977, appointed the Hon. C.M. Drury to look into the question of constitutional development in the Northwest Territories. In March, 1980, Mr. Drury reported his findings to the Prime Minister. The time is quickly coming when the government will make substantial decisions on political change of and for the North.

In the meantime, native organizations of the N.W.T. are pressing to resolve other issues like ownership of lands, native harvesting rights and access to resources. Because the Dene and Metis live side by side in the same communities in the Mackenzie Valley, the Dene are preparing to carry on the negotiations with the cooperation of the Metis.

The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, a national organization representing Canada's Inuit people, spearheads the negotiations for the Inuit of the Central and Eastern Arctic. To date little progress has been made in negotiations on this claim.

In 1977, the Committee for Original People's Entitlement (COPE) presented its own proposal entitled "Inuvialuit Nunangat" for a land claim agreement covering the Western Arctic Region.

An Agreement in Principle was signed in Sachs Harbour in October 1978 which staked out for the Inuvialuit 37 000 square miles of land harvesting rights in the Western Arctic region and monetary compensation of \$45 million. In May 1979 agreement was reached on most of the land selection component of the claim. Negotiations towards reaching a final agreement were then interrupted and did not resume until the fall of 1980.

In the Yukon, the Council for Yukon Indians (CYI) represents status and non-status Indians for claim negotiation purposes. The CYI claim covers most of the Yukon and asks for outright ownership of lands for native communities, exclusive hunting, trapping and fishing rights over other lands and compensation for past use of Indian land, plus a share in resource development. It also seeks ways of achieving self-determination for native people.

An interesting point, which says much about Canadians, is that there has been virtually no objection to the idea of settling native claims. The general public view since 1973 has been that there should be honest and just settlements.

Land claims settlements are seen as urgent because of the increasing influx of southerners and southern lifestyles. Relatively few people move North to stay, but many construction workers, government officials, businessmen and tourists flow into the Northwest Territories and Yukon each month.

Who could have imagined 30 years ago that huge numbers of people would be pouring into this seemingly harsh, inaccessible and expensive land?

When more outsiders than residents start entering a territory there is the potential for problems. The northern lifestyle and philosophy just are not the same as those of the south. Persons going North, for whatever reasons, should remember that. Northerners are extremely friendly and helpful but they also are cautious of people from 'The Outside'.

They are very proud of their territories and what they are achieving there. They have a strong feeling of participating in something new, exciting and important. They are pioneers, no-nonsense types who don't suffer fools easily.

Good advice to anyone going North of 60 is to learn to be a good listener. Most northerners have had interesting experiences. Sitting back and listening to these will be a lot more enjoyable and productive than hogging the conversation with probably boring news of the south.

Try to learn about the native people and their cultures when you travel north. These people are honest and open and will help anyone who shows a genuine willingness to broaden his or her horizons. Show respect for their way of life and their rights.

But whether you are in the North for work or holidays, or a combination of both, try to get out on the land and get the feel of the place. The land itself has a lot to say.

Robert Service listened to it when he went North three-quarters of a century ago in the Klondike Rush. Here's what he wrote in *The Spell Of The Yukon*:
"I wanted the gold and I sought it;
I scrabbled and mucked like a slave.
Was it famine or scurvy – I fought it,
I hurled my youth into the grave.
I wanted the gold and I got it –
Came out with a fortune last fall, –
Yet somehow life's not what I thought it,
And somehow the gold isn't all.
No! There's the land. (Have you seen it?)
It's the cussedest land that I know,
From the big, dizzy mountains that screen it,
To the deep, deathlike valleys below.
Some say God was tired when He made it;
Some say it's a fine land to shun;
Maybe: but there's some as would trade it
For no land on earth – and I'm one."

The Richardson Mountains run north to the Beaufort Sea, forming a natural boundary between the Yukon and the NWT.







Canada